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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8478
INFO RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE 4753
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 3575
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PBTS](#) [UNSC](#) [AG](#) [WI](#) [MO](#)
SUBJECT: BRIEFING MOROCCO ON THE U.S. VIEW ON THE WAY
FORWARD IN WESTERN SAHARA

REF: STATE 043370

Classified By: Ambassador Thomas T. Riley for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Moroccan Foreign Minister Taieb Fassi Fihri expressed his country's deep appreciation for support from the Department and Washington generally, when briefed by Ambassador telephonically on our plans for an explanation of vote in New York and of reaching out to the Polisario.

¶2. (C) Comment: The Moroccans will likely attempt to pocket the advantages gained in the SYG report, Van Walsum's statement and the final text of the resolution and any accompanying explanations by Security Council members. They have scheduled a CORCAS Congress May 2-3. The GOM is not likely to depart from the autonomy proposal and does not appear ready to show additional flexibility. It is not clear that they would now be willing to meet Polisario representatives, as anything approaching equals, outside the Manhasset process.

¶3. (C) Comment continued: Aside from encouraging improved relations between Morocco and Algeria, for whom the Sahara dispute remains a neuralgic issue, the USG may also effectively encourage positive movement by continuing our efforts to push for improvements on the ground in the Western Sahara. The Moroccans could take some steps to build confidence that the autonomy proposal is genuine, and if agreed, would be implemented. Specifically, they could allow human rights organizations run by Polisario sympathizers to register as legal Moroccan organizations. They also could remove known human rights abusers from the territory (we have raised this in our human rights discussions). Finally, on the heels of the April 28 release by a court of a Sahrawi prisoner who was on a hunger strike, they could release some Sahrawi prisoners of conscience. In the current environment such gestures could be read by Sahrawis on both sides of the berm as increasing the proposal's credibility. End Comment.

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Riley